



## **Board Report: May 4, 2017**

*By Mary Ella Anderson, Treasurer*

The Board devoted a good portion of its May 4 meeting to its Net Zero Impact Plan for the Eureka Remodel. Since the remodel was first proposed, the board has been committed to a plan that would not increase the amount of waste going to the landfill and have a positive effect by reducing our overall carbon footprint.

Our consultant Juliette Bohn, owner of JPB Consulting, presented the Net Zero Impact plan that she developed to help the Co-op to ensure that the Eureka store remodel will result in zero net environmental impacts, including waste, energy, water, and greenhouse gas emissions. The Eureka remodel project includes an expansion of the deli to meet customer demands and improve working conditions for staff.

The plan will be in effect over a five-year period. Data relevant to it is already being compiled. We will have data from before the plan is implemented, during the period when the construction and changes are taking place, and after the remodel is completed. The recycling component calls for a system that separates items immediately on site, the promotion of re-usable food and drink containers, emphasis on freshly cooked food from local producers and helping members transition from throw-away fast food to prepared food that is locally sourced and better for the preservation of our environment.

Following the discussion, some small changes were suggested and a final plan will be forthcoming. To help meet our commitment to change, we will be hiring a Sustainability Coordinator to keep us on track.

In the same vein, the Board discussed a recommendation from the Member Action Committee (MAC) to expand the existing bag credit to promote the use of durable bags and containers for produce and bulk foods by offering higher bag credits was put forward, along with a recommendation to offer a smaller credit for the re-use of non-durable plastic bags. The recommendation will be forwarded to the operations team to consider.

We also learned that the Co-op Access Program, suggested by MAC two years ago, is now in operation. This program was designed to aid low income families to gain access to high-quality organic food as well as the benefits of membership. There are 51 members participating in this pilot project – 30 are new members and 21 existing members qualified for this program.

Finally, General Manager Melanie Bettenhausen is doing a thorough review of the refrigeration failure that happened at the Arcata store. Our insurance covered the loss of food, but it was difficult to throw away so much because it would have been unsafe to consume. The question now is should we keep the system we have or shift to something newer and more climate friendly? Melanie is looking into next steps, as we don't want to have to go through this again. A member suggested that signs should have been put up to



explain the empty shelves. We agreed and apologize for not having done so. We also appreciate the way the Arcata staff pulled together to handle the situation.